

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Pinhaw Moor.on the Colne to Skipton old back road.

In the peaceful countryside of Pinhaw Moor, there stood a testament to a bygone era. A solitary hut, weathered and worn by the passage of time, perched atop the summit. It was a remnant of an age when the moor served as a Beacon Hill, a vigilant watchtower overlooking the land. The hut bore witness to the dedication and sacrifice of the beacon guards who stood their ground against potential threats.

It was the year 1805, a time when fears of invasion loomed heavy in the hearts of the English people. News had reached Pinhaw Moor that Napoleon Bonaparte, the French Emperor, had set his sights on the English coast. The beacon guards stationed at the hut, led by a steadfast man named Robert Wilson, kept a vigilant eye on the horizon, awaiting any signs of danger.

Winter had settled upon the land, cloaking everything in a pristine white blanket of snow. But as the snowfall intensified, the beacon guards found themselves trapped within the confines of their shelter. Days turned into a seemingly endless barrage of snowflakes, leaving them isolated and cut off from the outside world.

Inside the hut, their supplies dwindled, and hunger gnawed at their stomachs. Robert Wilson, resolute and determined, made a decision. He would brave the treacherous storm and venture across the moor to Moor Side Farm, where provisions awaited. His companions, aware of the peril that awaited him outside, pleaded with him to reconsider, to wait out the storm until help arrived. But Robert's unwavering spirit could not be swayed.

With his bag slung over his shoulder and a milk can in hand, Robert Wilson stepped into the maelstrom of swirling snow. The howling winds threatened to swallow him whole as he forged ahead, leaving behind the warmth and safety of the hut.

Time stretched on, and his fellow guards anxiously awaited his return. The storm raged with unyielding fury, blurring the lines between hope and despair. But as the tempest finally began to relent, Robert's absence weighed heavily on their hearts. Concern turned into fear, and fear into the realization that something had gone terribly wrong.

The men, driven by a mix of worry and determination, made their way through the now tranquil moor to the nearby village. They rallied the villagers, and a search party was quickly organized. With unwavering resolve, they combed the icy landscape, desperate to find their missing comrade.

And then, as if guided by an unseen hand, they stumbled upon a sight that pierced their hearts. In a desolate stretch of land, roughly four hundred yards from the hut, lay the lifeless body of Robert Wilson. His face, frozen in a peaceful repose, bore the marks of an arduous journey and a valiant struggle against the elements.

Grief washed over the search party, mingling with a profound sense of respect for the fallen beacon guard. In honor of his sacrifice, his friends erected a stone at the spot where he had perished. Upon its surface, the words etched deep into the weathered rock served as a reminder of Robert Wilson's unwavering dedication: "Here was found dead the body of Robert Wilson, one of the beacon guards, who died January 29, 1805, aged 59 years."

Time continued its ceaseless march, and the years unfolded like pages in a book. Yet, the stone endured, standing as a silent testament to a man who gave his life in the service of his country. Pinhaw Moor remained serene, its rolling hills and moors bearing witness to the stories of generations past.

To this day, visitors to Pinhaw Moor can still find the weathered stone, standing firm amidst the passage of time. It serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by those who stood guard, their unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of their fellow countrymen.

And though the snow may fall and the winds may howl, the memory of Robert Wilson and his gallant spirit endures, forever etched in the annals of Pinhaw Moor's history.

By Donald Jay.